

Episode 33

My Marriage

My parents were in search of a suitable bride for me, and their search finally ended upon the daughter of respected Sharafat Husain Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him). Respected Sharafat Husain Sahab was a businessman by profession but had a reverential relationship with my respected father and all other pious elders of the city, to such an extent that each of them would think that he was closer to them. He was originally from Allahabad, and even there he had a special relationship with Hazrat Hakeem Ul Umma's *Khalifa* Hazrat Maulana Wasi Ullah Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him). My mother was quite ill in those days so the marriage proposal was sent through my elder sisters. Hazrat Baba Najam Ahsan Sahab was an ascetic *Khalifa* of Hazrat Hakeem Ul Ummah (may Allah's mercy be upon them both) from whom *Kashf*¹ was witnessed. He resided in a small room of my childhood friend respected Kaleem Sahab's house (whom I have mentioned while relating my childhood days). It was from this small room that his teachings would spread and people would benefit from them. I also received the good fortune of frequently presenting myself in his service, and he would be extremely benevolent towards me. He would also advise me at my mistakes through fatherly reprimands. When he learnt that my proposal had been sent to respected Sharafat Husain Sahab's house, rather perhaps my mother-in-law to-be requested his opinion about this proposal, he wrote a letter to her of which I was not aware until a long time later, when my mother-in-law gave it to me. I preserved it as a good omen in my file of glad tidings. The letter contained the following words:

“Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakaatuhu. Whatever I am writing, Alhamdulillah I am writing with complete honesty and truthfulness. There is no reason for me to deceive myself or anyone else due to any ulterior motives. I like (this proposal) so much that I wish I had such a worthy, blessed and capable child. I am telling the truth; I have even heard an

¹ Translator: *Kashf*: Unveiling of normally hidden knowledge

unseen voice in a dream saying: "Allah will take work from this child." I have no qualms about him after hearing this glad tiding. From his outward appearance, he does not look effeminate, does not shave his beard and moustache, and follows the *Sunnah* of Allah's beloved ﷺ. His health is also quite good, and with the Grace of Allah he is also well-groomed and well-dressed. He is quite jovial and lighthearted, and masterful in speech and writing. Arabic and Urdu are like mother tongue to him, and in English he has passed Graduate and L.L.B Final examinations. Youth nowadays often adopt effeminate appearances and possess similar courage, as well as similarly weakened intelligence and health. Allah has set an entirely different standard of beauty for man. Furthermore, nowadays it also sometimes happens that within a week or two, the husband begins beating his wife. This happens because both are unwilling to concede to each other. The husband considers his wife a slave, which sparks the dispute. The wife is not a slave; she is a life-partner and should be treated as such.

Our young man earns a decent living, but he does not earn by cheating anyone, and InshaAllah Allah will continue bestowing. The best conduct and appreciation is hoped for your daughter. I am well aware of all kinds of young men. It is with this in mind and after carefully contemplating this matter that I have reached the opinion I have stated. What use is a well-groomed stylish young man if he is bereft of humanity, love, and competence, is unconcerned about the Hereafter, and his mentality is not properly Islamic? Do not at all fear any ill-treatment, harshness or strictness. Wassalam."

Anyway! In this manner, my *Nikah* took place on the 17th of Dhul Hijjah 1388H, equivalent to the 5th of March 1969, in Masjid Bab ul-Islam Aram Bagh. This is the same mosque near which five years of my childhood were spent, which I have described before. Our respected father had requested Hazrat Allama Zafar Ahmad Sahab Usmani (may Allah's mercy be upon him) to conduct the *Nikah*. Despite his old age and frailty, Hazrat benevolently came all the way from Tando Allahyar and conducted the *Nikah*, and carried out the *Eejab Wa Qubool* (Offer and Acceptance) with me in Arabic. Senior scholars and pious elders of the time were in attendance at the *Nikah* Ceremony, including all of my teachers, my *Shaikh* (spiritual mentor) Hazrat Arifi, Hazrat Allama Yusuf Sahab Binnori, Hazrat Baba Najam Ahsan Sahab (may Allah's mercy be

upon them all) and others. My respected father organized a *Walima*¹ in Darul Uloom Korangi the next day, which was mostly attended by teachers and students of Darul Uloom and some close relatives. Since it was quite difficult for acquaintances and relatives residing in the city to come to Darul Uloom, a second *Walima* was organized in the city in our house at Ashraf Manzil, where food was served on the floor. In those days, Delhi Muslim Hotel served Delhi cuisine as its specialty. The owners of that restaurant, who were neighbours of my father-in-law, prepared the food with much love and affection. Through the supplications of those elders, Allah Ta'ala put *Barakah* in this marriage and with the grace of Allah my wife is fulfilling the rights of companionship in the best possible manner till this day. May Allah Ta'ala reward her the best of rewards. However, I do not know how much I lived up to the expectations that Hazrat Baba Sahab (may his secrets be sanctified) had expressed about me.

A year after the marriage, on *Ashura* 1390H, equivalent to 23rd March 1970, Allah Ta'ala bestowed my first son upon me. Our respected father named him "Muhammad Imran Ashraf" and Hazrat Baba Najam Ahsan Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him) gave him the historical name of "Farrukh Taqi".

A Small Service to Maariful Quran

During the last years of his life, our respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) remained busy day and night authoring Maariful Quran. This was a time when our respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) was plagued by ill health and at the same time was also exceptionally busy with national and communal activities. Incredibly, he would still find time for authoring Maariful Quran in the midst of all these activities. This was to such an extent that during the war of 1965, when the entire city was engulfed in darkness due to the black out, he would close a room, carefully light a table lamp inside such that its light could not reach outside, and would continue with his work in this way. Sirens signally air strikes would sound, bomber jets would zoom and boom about in the sky, and his pen would continue writing.

¹ Translator: *Walima*: Marriage banquet

Since our respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) would often be plagued by various illnesses, he was anxious to complete Maariful Quran within his life time. To this end, in 1392H, equivalent to 1972, he assigned two tasks related to Maariful Quran to me: Firstly, he commanded me to pen the first draft of the Tafsir of some Surahs, and secondly, he instructed that there was a need for an introduction at the beginning of Maariful Quran which should contain some general information related to the Noble Quran. Though I found both tasks beyond my capability, I considered my respected father's (may Allah's mercy be upon him) instructions as a good omen and soothed my heart with the thought: "Whatever I write, I will anyway present it to respected father at the end. In this way my mistakes will be corrected and I will also learn." I therefore divided my time such that whatever time remained from teaching during the day, I devoted it to writing the Tafsir of Surah Saffaat as my respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) had commanded. In writing the Tafsir, I tried to keep in mind the points that our respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) paid particular attention to in his Tafsir. When the Tafsir of Surah Saffaat was completed, I began the Tafsir of Surah Saad with my respected father's (may Allah's mercy be upon him) instructions, and Alhamdulillah it was also completed soon. By this time, my respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) had reached Surah Yaseen, and at this point I presented by manuscript of Surah Saffaat and Surah Saad. Hazrat read the entire manuscript and also made corrections at some places. Later, my respected father assigned Surah Zukhruf to me, and Alhamdulillah I was blessed to write its Tafsir as well, and he reviewed it thereafter. This work began in Muharram 1392H (March 1972) and, with the help of Allah Ta'ala, was completed in Rajab 1392H. For these three Surahs, our respected father commanded me to write the entire first draft of their Tafsir and thereafter reviewed it himself. And later one day, when I was not in his presence but could hear his words in another room, he said to someone: "Alhamdulillah, whatever work I assign to Taqi, I do not have to use my pen much on it." And all praise is to Allah for this.

In such cases, when a senior takes work from his junior, authors normally do not feel the need to mention it, because it is in fact a process used by the senior to nurture the junior and the work produced by the junior is actually through the teachings and blessings of the senior himself. However, my respected father (may Allah sanctify his secrets), either due to

scrupulousness or for encouragement, mentioned this insignificant service of mine in the preface of Maariful Quran. While mentioning writing of Maariful Quran, he wrote:

“The middle two *Manzils* from Surah Shu’ara to Surah Hujuraat remained. I began them as well with the name of Allah. From these, I assigned Surahs Saad, Saffaat and Zukhruf to my dear son Maulvi Muhammad Taqi (may Allah keep him safe) and reviewed them myself and began writing the other Surahs myself. About two-and-a-half *Juz* of the Noble Quran remained when on the 24th of Rabi Uth-Thanee (8 June 1972) I was afflicted with a sudden and severe heart ailment... When I came to some senses, the notion of completing the remaining Tafsir seemed to melt away into an unattainable longing. I lightened my heart’s burden by bidding my dear son Maulvi Muhammad Taqi (may Allah keep him safe) to complete the remaining parts.” (Preface to Maariful Quran, Page 66 Volume 1).

When Allah Ta’ala bestowed recovery from this illness and my respected father restarted work from Surah Shooraa, he again involved me in the Tafsir of several Surahs and I was blessed to receive a partial share in their writing. My respected father mentioned this also in a marginalia in the Tafsir of Surah Shooraa:

“The status of Maariful Quran is that when this incident took place, I had almost finished writing Maariful Quran until the end of the Quran. The middle sixth Manzil was left due to certain reason. Its writing had reached the current point in Surah Shooraa and a further one-and-a-half *Juz* remained till Surah Hujurat. Now it is as if Allah Ta’ala has given a second life and doctors have given permission to read and write, so I have restarted this work in the name of Allah by involving my son Maulvi Muhammad Taqi together with me in this work. And Allah alone is the Helper!” (Maariful Quran Page 686 (Marginalia) Volume 7)

Uloom ul-Quran

For the second task, i.e. writing an introduction to Maariful Quran, I had allotted my evening time at home. When I began this work, I came across numerous important relevant topics about which I felt the need to research more and write at more length. And in this manner,

instead of an introduction to Maariful Quran, this work took the form of a separate book in its own right. The topic which required the hardest work and which caused me the most mental perplexity was the discussion of "*Sab'ah Ahruf*" (Seven Huroof). I tried to ferret out and digest any information on this topic wherever I found it, and this chapter was finally completed after several months. However, despite all this I did not trust my understanding and the heart remained unsettled as to whether I had reached the correct conclusion or not.

Finally, I thought that the biggest Imam of Qiraat of the time was Hazrat Maulana Qari Fateh Muhammad Sahab Panipati, who with the grace of Allah was spreading his knowledge in the Nanak Warah branch of Darul Uloom. I therefore presented myself in his service and submitted: "I will not feel contented until I present whatever I have written on this topic to you for review." Since Hazrat was blind and all his knowledge was saved in his memory, presenting my writing to him meant reading out the entire text to him. Hazrat kindly replied: "I will visit Darul Uloom one day and spend the night there. You can read your writing to me at that time." Thereafter Hazrat visited after a few days and spent the night at Darul Uloom, and I read out the entire chapter to Hazrat after Isha. Hazrat listened to the entire text attentively, and perhaps also advised some improvements at some places, but gave his full support to the position taken in that text. The *Imam of Qiraat* Hazrat Allama Jazari (may Allah's mercy be upon him) has also stated in his book "*An-Nashr*" that he had reached the same conclusion regarding the explanation of "*Sab'ah Ahruf*" after pondering over it for twenty years, and to my knowledge Hazrat Maulana Qari Fateh Muhammad Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him) was certainly the Allama Jazari of his time. After his concurrence, Alhamdulillah the qualms regarding this chapter were allayed and I made it part of this book.

Besides this, non-Muslim Westerners, in the name of academic research, had raised doubts and suspicions regarding the Noble Quran. I found it necessary to discuss those as well in this introduction. To this end, I referred to as many books of those Westerners as I could and delved into detailed discussions on their claims, and proved their doubts and suspicions baseless.

In those times, incorrect and misleading methodologies of various groups with respect to the exegesis of the Noble Quran were gaining popularity. In view of this, it was also felt necessary

to describe the correct principles of Tafsir. I therefore created a separate section for it and explained the fundamental reasons for the misguidances found regarding this, and for this discussion made Hakeem Ul Ummah Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahab Thanvi (may Allah's mercy be upon him) book "*Al-Intibaahaat ul-Mufeedah*" as the base.

I had allotted the time after Maghrib for this work and would try my best to spend that time in this work only. One day my beloved brother respected Muhammad Zaki Kaifi Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him), who used to stay in Lahore and would come only once or twice a year to visit his parents and siblings and would spend a few weeks or a month in Karachi, was sitting with our respected father after Maghrib. His conversations with our respected father were quite interesting and informative. He was widely read and would often ask our respected father academic questions. Additionally, he was an excellent poet so sometimes the topic of poetry would be kindled during those conversations. I liked all these topics and would savour whatever time I got in *Bhai Sahab's* company. For this reason, I wanted to be part of this conversation, but this was the time I had allotted to writing *Uloom ul-Quran*. If I attended the conversation, it would mean skipping the writing of this book for the day. The heart did not accept this as well. The solution I found to this dilemma was that I brought the manuscript and the books relevant to the topic under writing near the two elders, such that I could hear the conversation and also continue adding something to the manuscript. For a while, Bhai Jaan eyed me sitting neither here nor there, then remarked: "What are you doing, neither completely being part of our conversation nor focusing on your work. Choose one thing." At this, our respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) replied: "This is the way of those who work. A busy person has to take care of multiple tasks at the same time, so his action is correct." I felt reassured by our respected father's encouraging words and the qualms were allayed.

In short, this writing mushroomed from an introduction into a separate book. When I presented it to our respected father, though he liked it much, he also said: "It is not appropriate to include this in *Maariful Quran*. It is a separate academic and scholarly book and should be published as such." It was also named "*Uloom ul-Quran*" at our respected father's directions and he also

wrote an extremely encouraging preface to it which stemmed from his extreme humility and an extraordinary encouragement of an unworthy son of his. I do not find the courage to even narrate his words from that preface. Thereafter he commanded me: “Now write a simple and brief summary of this which can be beneficial for common people and can help common readers of the Tafsir of the Quran.” Hazrat himself chose the topics to be included in that summary and I prepared it in light of Hazrat’s instructions. Thereafter Hazrat published it as the introduction to Maariful Quran.

Trip to Islamabad for a New Constitution

During those days the National Assembly of the country was mulling over a new draft of the Constitution. General Muhammad Ayub Khan Sahab had annulled the Constitution of 1956. Then in 1962 he implemented a new Constitution over which the political parties had raised objections. A new Constitution was to be drafted after West Pakistan’s separation in 1971, and the People’s Party Government, under the leader of the late Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Sahab, had presented a draft Constitution in the National assembly. In this backdrop, the debate was re-stirred in the country as to what kind of Constitution should be formulated. Secular circles always attempted to make it irreligious, but this time it was presumed from the People’s Party Government, which had come to power promising Socialism, that it would try to steer the country towards Socialism by somehow inserting Socialism into the Constitution. It was therefore necessary to take academic as well as practical steps to steer the Constitution in the right direction. I stayed away from practical politics, but I would write detailed editorials in Al-Balagh on these topics. I wrote two editorials in the Muharram and Safar 1391H editions of Al-Balagh titled “The Meaning of an Islamic Constitution” and “Islamic Articles to the Constitution”. In the first editorial, I described the Constitutional foundations of an Islamic State. This editorial was actually based on my respected father’s booklet “Quranic Constitution” in which some additions were made in accordance with contemporary times. The second editorial explained how to incorporate those Islamic foundations into legislative articles in the current Constitution, so that their aims could be attained in the current environment. Copies of

both these editorials were also distributed among members of the National Assembly so that they could ponder over them.

The founder and Principal of Darul Uloom Haqqania Akora Khattak, Shaikhul Hadith Hazrat Maulana Abdul Haq Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him), was a member of the National Assembly. I have previously mentioned the incident of my first meeting with his worthy and capable son Maulana Samee ul-Haq Sahab (may Allah protect him)¹ while describing the tour of 1955. Thereafter our friendship became closer through Al-Balagh and Al-Haq magazines. We would also sometimes get to meet during gatherings convened to discuss any noteworthy matters, rather we would also create opportunities just to meet up. He considered the current circumstances as a good excuse to meet, so it was probably him who must have recommended to his honourable father (may his secret be sanctified) to call Taqi to participate in the task of compiling Amendments to the draft Constitution. He therefore gave me Hazrat's message and, after getting my respected father's permission, I departed for Islamabad. I stayed at a relative's house there. I began getting a glimpse of the brilliance of the spiritually radiant personality of Shaikhul Hadith Hazrat Maulana Abdul Haq Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him) during this time. Despite his brilliance and accomplishments, I witnessed amazing incidents of his extreme humility. A day after arriving in Islamabad, when I arrived in the Gallery of the National Assembly together with Maulana Samee ul-Haq Sahab, Hazrat was sitting at his place in the Assembly Hall. Seeing me arrive, he came out of the Assembly Hall. Seeing him leave his place, we climbed down the stairs to the entrance of the Assembly Hall. When I respectfully presented by *Salam*, Hazrat replied with extreme innocence: "Hazrat! You have been very benevolent." I was his son's age, so these words submerged me in embarrassment. However, this angelic individual had no idea at all what a meaningless particle he was addressing, and was completely oblivious to the lofty status of his own knowledge and accomplishments. He did not consider himself to be anything at all, and this is the highest level of humility which I have observed in a

¹ This text was written in 2014 when Maulana Samee ul-Haq Sahab was alive. Sadly, Maulana Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him) has attained the high station of martyrdom when this text is being published. *Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Raji'oon*. (We certainly belong to Allah, and to Him we are bound to return).

handful of individuals besides my respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him), and Hazrat Maulana Abdul Haq Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him) is at the top of this list. Anyway! I got to spend a few days in the company of Hazrat Maulana Samee ul-Haq Sahab which left several happy memories. We both analyzed the draft Constitution and wherever we found a need for amendment from an Islamic point of view, we prepared the Amendment under the guidance of Hazrat Shaikh Maulana Abdul Haq Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him). These Amendments were later presented in the Assembly on his behalf, of which some were accepted and some not.

The People's Party had come to power promising Socialism, so the word "Socialism" had been incorporated into the draft Constitution from their side, which created apprehensions that this could potentially open the door to declaring the country a Socialist state. In those days, members from religious circles were in much smaller number in the Assembly than members from the People's Party, but Alhamdulillah due to the efforts of people like Hazrat Maulana Mufti Mahmood Sahab, Hazrat Maulana Sahab Ahmad Noorani Sahab, respected Professor Abdul Ghafoor Sahab and Hazrat Maulana Zafar Ahmad Ansari Sahab, as well as pressure from an overwhelming majority of the nation, they had to take back this proposition, and with the grace and benevolence of Allah Ta'ala, such a Constitution was prepared which, overall, was agreed upon by all parties of the time, and considering the circumstances of the time, it was more than what could be expected.